



Lexington City Schools



A Return to In-Person Learning -
October 7, 2020 Updates



In the last week...

Our administrators have...

- ★ Met with the LDMS staff
- ★ Met with some grade level groups at HWES
- ★ Talked with individual teachers and staff
- ★ Responded to many individual emails and questions
- ★ Continued to reflect on and consider feedback from families
- ★ Reviewed daily community data levels and updated guidance from VDH, CDC, and local health experts
- ★ School administrators and counselors continue to work with families and individual students to monitor engagement and progress. These teams continue to work on ideas to support students who are struggling - looking at in-person supports, community resources, etc...

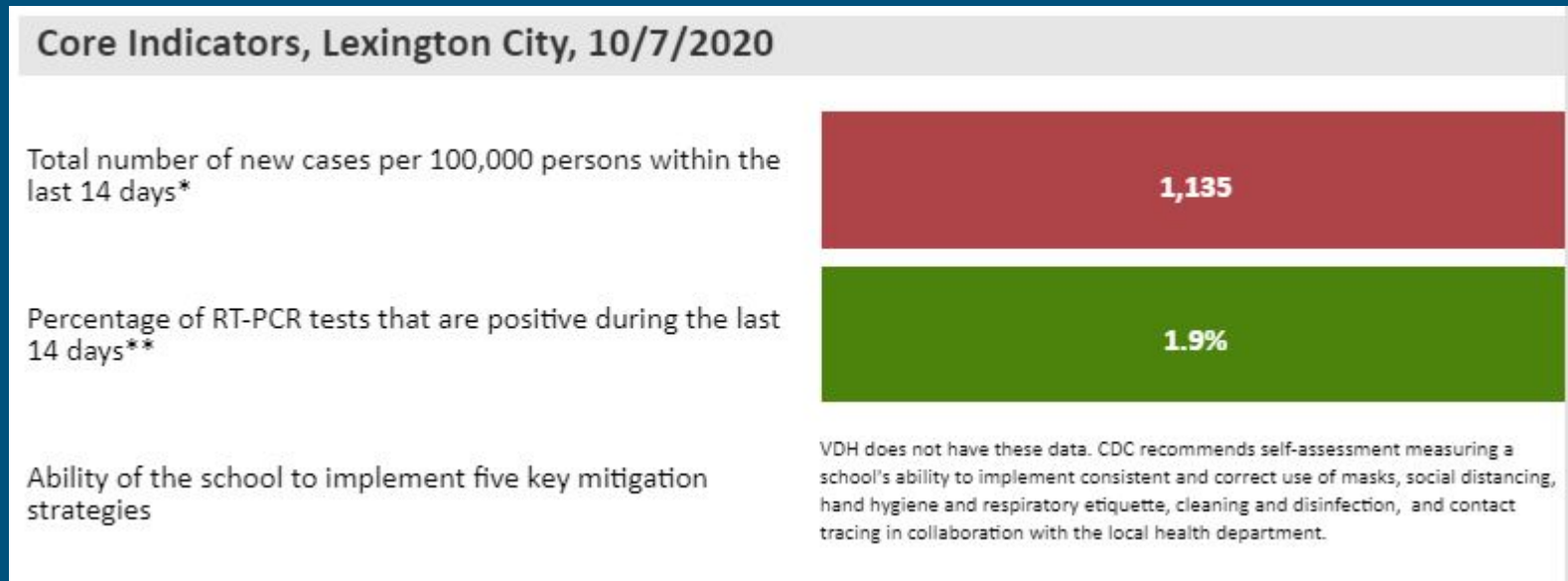
Feedback from Teachers and Staff --

- ★ With positive feedback about virtual learning from many school families, many teachers are concerned about how they can keep the quality of virtual instruction high while also teaching in-person.
- ★ Most teachers remain concerned about their ability to effectively plan and deliver both in-person and virtual instruction.
- ★ Some teachers feel we are rushing the return to in-person while others feel we should bring students back ASAP.
- ★ Some teachers are worried about the number of students they can realistically have in their rooms while others are concerned about social distancing being realistic for younger children at all.
- ★ Elementary teachers are worried about how they can logistically offer small group instruction.
- ★ Most teachers remain concerned about the increased workload required to plan, teach, and provide feedback to both in-person and virtual learners.

Additional Strategies for Consideration --

- ★ We are working with the middle school schedule and staffing to see if we can potentially streamline teaching duties to focus on in-person OR virtual classes. This remains a challenge with teachers who teach at multiple grades as the only content area teacher for their course(s).
- ★ Our team has identified and met with individuals at HWES who could potentially serve as the virtual teacher at each grade level. This will require some teacher reassignments and staffing modifications. Teams seem to be mostly pleased with this possibility.
- ★ We are working with specialists to determine the safest way to deliver instruction. Specials for virtual learners will likely be asynchronous.
- ★ Principals are working to prioritize teacher planning/professional learning on Fridays.
- ★ We have met with individual teachers who may request/require additional accommodations with the return to in-person learning.
- ★ We may need to secure an additional paraprofessional to support instructional needs in both buildings.












Daily Review of Community Data Levels --



As of 10/7/2020, Lexington City remains at the “highest risk” of transmission for schools based on the number of new cases per 100,000 persons within the last 14 days. This is one piece of data that we are currently using to determine next steps.

New VDH Guidance for Schools --

The CDC Indicators have been aligned to the [Phase Guidance for Virginia Schools](#) previously issued. Below is a summary of how these pieces of state and federal guidance on school reopening plans should be considered by local school leaders.

 <h2>GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS</h2>		
LOWEST OR LOWER RISK Schools may consider Phase III Recommendations	MODERATE OR HIGH RISK Schools may consider Phase II Recommendations	HIGHEST RISK Schools may consider Phase I Recommendations
		
 <p>In schools with lower risk of transmission, all students may be given the opportunity for in person instruction with mitigation and physical distancing measures in place. Facilities and staffing limitations may necessitate hybrid schedules.</p>  <p>A fully remote learning option should be available for all students and staff.</p>	 <p>In schools with moderate or higher risk of transmission, specific learners should be prioritized for limited in person instruction, including willing students with disabilities, english learners, and PreK - 3rd grade students.</p>  <p>All other students should be served remotely. Fully remote option should be available to all.</p>	 <p>In schools with high risk of transmission, in person instruction should be limited to students with disabilities, as deemed appropriate by parents and IEP teams.</p>  <p>All other students should be served remotely. Divisions may consider a fully remote option.</p>  <p>Plans should be in place to phase back to in-person instruction.</p>

Interim VDH Guidance for Schools at “Highest Risk” Levels --

Considerations for Schools At Highest Risk of Transmission in School

Use [Phase 2 and Phase 1 Guidance for Virginia Schools](#) for recommendations on the scope of programming and mitigation strategies and consider the following:

- Remote learning should be considered as the primary method of instruction, as described in [Phase 1 Guidance for Virginia Schools](#).
- If at “highest” risk of transmission, limit in-person instruction to students with disabilities if the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team agrees it is appropriate and the parent consents.
- If at “higher” risk schools may consider in-person instruction for other priority student groups, such as preschool through third grade students and English learners.
- Eliminate or limit extracurricular activities that are not for the purpose of providing childcare.
- Cancel social activities and gatherings that are not part of providing regular school services.
- Child care for working families may operate in schools but should be limited to children in the local geographic area.
- Strongly encourage and/or consider requiring the use of [cloth face coverings](#) for staff and students (as developmentally feasible).

Guidance from VDH's Dr. Laura Kornegay --

- ★ Agrees that higher case levels in Lexington/Rockbridge appear to be from universities
- ★ University outbreaks appear to be internal without huge community spread
- ★ Our universities seem to have good strategies in place to minimize spread
- ★ Transmission seems to be primarily between students, not between students and staff
- ★ The key to successful in-person is strong implementation of the 5 mitigation strategies
- ★ Transmission in K-12 schools seems to be teacher-to-teacher without strict social distancing with most transmission from outside of the school buildings
- ★ Dr. Kornegay agrees that a phase-in plan for a return to in-person learning is a reasonable approach for our district

Considerations for Next Steps --

- ★ Continue to monitor community levels and confer with VDH/local health department weekly regarding the impact of university cases on local community data
- ★ According to the latest VDH/CDC guidance for schools, focus our first steps on an in-person return for K-3 students followed by a transition to in-person learning for grades 4-8
- ★ At the October 14th School Board meeting, consider moving forward with a plan to return K/1 grade students in-person the week of October 26th.
- ★ At the October 28th School Board meeting, consider moving forward with a plan to return 2nd/3rd grade students the week of November 9th and a return of 4th/5th students the week of November 16th.
- ★ At the November 11th School Board meeting, assess the initial return and review community data to determine a plan for 6th-8th grade return to in-person potentially starting later in November.

Closing Thoughts --

- ★ As a school community, it is essential that all stakeholders (staff, students, and families) continue to understand that plans and operations may change at ANY TIME as a result of changing information.
- ★ We will continue to update our stakeholders as we move forward. Thank you all for your support during this unprecedented time.
- ★ Questions?